

SITUATION REPORT NO. 9

INCIDENT NO. 2000-016

DATE: June 16, 2000

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Flooding – Due to a series of thunderstorms since June 12 and high water tables, resulting from eight years of consecutive flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: The N.D. Highway Patrol confirmed that the body of a Nelson County man has been recovered from the Turtle River. The man was a passenger in a vehicle that fell 30 feet into a washed out section of a gravel road near Kolding Dam. An autopsy will be conducted on the body, which was recovered one quarter-mile to one-half mile downstream from the accident scene. The death of the vehicle's driver has been attributed to flood conditions.

Grand Forks officials also reported two flood-related injuries.

3. DAMAGES: Preliminary estimates by Grand Forks officials indicate that more than 800 residents in the Arvilla, Gilby, Mekinock and Manvel areas have reported major to minor flood damages. Estimates of home and business damage, by city, are as follows: Arvilla – 60 homes, five businesses and two rural homes; Gilby – 100 homes, eight businesses, nine apartments and eight rural homes; Mekinock – 27 homes, two businesses, four apartments and five rural homes; and Manvel – 175 homes, 14 businesses and two rural homes. As water recedes, some roads have been reopened. However, many remain inundated, including one county road near Gilby where the bridge washed out.

The Turtle River on the southwest edge of Manvel has overtopped its banks. Water is flowing over County Road 5 and moving west to the south ditch of County Road 33. Once floodwaters reach the ditch, they are expected to flow north over the roadway back into the Turtle River. The Turtle River at Manvel was at 17.15 feet this morning, an increase of 2.03 feet since yesterday. The river is expected to crest later today at 17.5 feet.

Rises on the Goose River have slowed significantly in the last 12 hours. The river had been rising one foot per hour yesterday evening, but had slowed to four inches per hour this morning. The river has crested and will continue a slow fall, from N.D. Highway 18 in Traill County to Northwood in Grand Forks County. Overland flooding continues from Hatton to Northwood. North of Hatton, most of the bridges are under water and the county roads in the area are impassable.

The Grand Forks Office of the National Weather Service (NWS) indicated that the weather pattern for the next three days should be cool, cloudy and breezy. During

this weekend, there is a chance that scattered showers will bring up to one-quarter inch of rain. High temperatures this weekend will range from the low 60s to low 70s. Projected conditions for Monday evening through Tuesday indicate the potential for rainfall of up to one inch.

Preliminary estimates by Grand Forks County agricultural officials place crop losses at nearly \$31 million. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) County Emergency Board estimates that 200 farms and 276,525 acres have been impacted during the recent severe thunderstorms. Percent of losses range from 10 to 70 percent for the following crops: spring and durum wheat, barley, corn, sunflowers, soybeans, sugar beets, edible beans, potatoes, canola, alfalfa and mixed hay.

Sewer backups occurred in a two-street area of New Rockford in Eddy County. Some roads remain under water, others washed out. Culvert washouts and road damages have been reported in seven townships; assessments are still underway. Road officials are expecting additional water damage caused by runoff from neighboring Wells County.

Also in Eddy County, percent of loss ranges from 10 to 50 percent for 152,420 acres of wheat, barley, canola, sunflower, soybeans, flax and edible beans. The USDA County Emergency Board estimates that 300 farms have been impacted by storm damages.

In Wells County, the USDA County Emergency Board reported a 100 percent of loss for that over 30,000 acres on 615 farms. Crops damaged by the rains of June 13-14 include wheat, barley, canola, sunflowers and dry beans.

Rainfall of six to 10.5 inches caused excessive flooding of fields and roads in Griggs County. The USDA County Emergency Board estimates that 8,808 acres on 150 farms have sustained crop loss from 20 to 30 percent of wheat, sunflowers, barley and dry beans.

During June 11-13, McHenry County officials reported that thunderstorms and rain in excess of 12 inches have caused damage to basements in the Bantry area. High winds and dime-sized hail that accompanied the rain caused damage to township roads.

An initial damage assessment in Walsh County indicates that two culverts have washed out, gravel roads are saturated and losing gravel, and Lake Ardoch has filled with water diverted from the Turtle River. Water from Lake Ardoch and the Forest River has forced the closure of County Road 4. Throughout the county, drainage channels are filling with large amounts of silt from runoff. In the city of Grafton, there are numerous reports of roof leaks and damage to light fixtures and ceiling tiles. The Golf Course has been closed because low-lying areas are filled with water. Floodwaters have washed out the manhole for the city park's storm drain shutoff.

Pembina County officials indicated that no significant damage to infrastructure has been identified at this time. Some township roads and drains that are running full in the southeast portion of the county cannot be assessed at this time due to

saturated conditions. Road crews will continue to assess damages to drains and township roads as water levels go down.

Extremely heavy rainfall in northeast North Dakota has impacted the Sheyenne River, prompting the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to increase flows from the Baldhill Dam. The dam pool currently has no storage capacity. Its current elevation is 1,265.92 feet; storage capacity measures 1,266 feet. Releases on Tuesday measured 74 cubic feet per second (cfs). On Thursday, the gates opened to 1,500 cfs. Releases may go to 2,000 cfs within the next few days. Valley City would not be affected until releases reach 2,500 to 3,000 cfs, and then only slightly as such releases would elevate the Sheyenne River to within its 13-foot flood stage.

During recent storm activity on June 12-13, central Kidder County received hard downpours of one to four inches of rain. The northern part, where emergency access roads were damaged by high winds in April, recorded six to eight inches after a severe thunderstorm on June 13. The additional rainfall compounded problems with high water tables, which increased two inches during the past month and an additional four to six inches with the additional rainfall. Wind gusts of up to 35 miles per hour (mph) eroded road shoulders, leaving narrow pathways and making travel dangerous. Roads that were previously not protected are now in danger of washing out and leaving residents without emergency access. The heavy downpours washed out or drowned crops that had been planted late in the season. Plants in low-lying areas have also been damaged. Many acres of hayland are under water due to the heavy rains in the northern part of the county.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Today, Governor Ed Schafer directed North Dakota Emergency Management Director Doug Friez to request Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) cooperation in conducting a local/state/federal Preliminary Damage Assessment of the flood-impacted area. The request was made and has been granted. The process will begin next week.

On Thursday, Lieutenant Governor Rosemarie Myrdal and Emergency Management Director Friez toured flooded areas of northeast North Dakota, including Grand Forks and Wells County. They reviewed the disaster recovery process with officials during a meeting in Manvel.

Federal officials are touring the flood-impacted area today to observe damages and to talk with residents. U.S. Representative Byron Dorgan, U.S. Senator Kent Conrad, Rick Weiland, FEMA Region VIII Director, and Scott Stofferahn, State Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency, participated in the tour.

Grand Forks County officials plan to provide an initial damage assessment report to North Dakota Emergency Management on June 19. Throughout the weekend, county employees will be working with mayors and township supervisors to compile damage assessments to homes, infrastructure and agricultural land.

Grand Forks Public Health Department will hold tetanus shot clinics in Manvel and Gilby on June 19. Local health officials will also provide free bacterial testing of private wells, which may have been contaminated by floodwaters or runoff. Residents were advised to assume that private wells may have been contaminated if water came within 50 feet of the well, or if the well casing was covered by water. Officials also provided health guidelines for flood-related cleanup.

The Eddy County Board of Commissioners has issued a disaster declaration because of flood-related problems.

The Walsh County Emergency Manager and the Walsh County Extension Agent are providing information on cleaning flooded basements.

As part of its plans to increase releases from the Baldhill Dam, the USACE notified the emergency manager who then contacted the media about the impending rise of the Sheyenne River. The emergency manager also consulted with the city safety officer, mayor, Barnes County Sheriff's Office and Barnes County Public Works.

In Kidder County, many townships volunteered time and equipment to help other townships save roads threatened by rising waters.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: With the exception of continuing technical support, no additional assistance has been requested.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: Officials and staff representing the N.D. State Water Commission, N.D. Department of Transportation, North Dakota Highway Patrol, the Governor's Office, N.D. Department of Human Services, the state's Congressional delegation and North Dakota Emergency Management have been in the impacted area at various times.
9. OTHER: Additional reports will follow as information on damages and impacts become available.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is:

<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director